659 the Communist Government in 1949, sought to establish a uniform regime for all religious denominations in the country. Nevertheless, some of its provisions, especially Section 3, recognize the historic role of the Bulgarian Church and attempt to use the established tradition for the purposes of the communist policy.

Thus, the present status of the Church in Bulgaria cannot be properly evaluated without a survey of its past.

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I. Christianity in Bulgaria, 865 -1870

A sizable Bulgarian Kingdom came into being in 680 A.D. in the area between the Danube and the Black Sea bordering on the Balkan territories of Byzantium.

Seeking international recognition, one of its kings, Boris I, agreed in 865 A.D. to the conversion of his people to Christianity under the auspices of the Byzantine emperor and the Patriarch of Constantinople, Byzantine missionaries and priests were swiftly dispatched to Bulgaria to evangelize the country. Five years later, the Patriarch conceded, on insistent Bulgarian demands, the right of the Bulgarian King to have a Bulgarian archbishop with authority to crown kings and ordain bishops, retaining, nevertheless, supremacy over the new ecclesiastic hierarchy.

The extension of the Patriarch's authority to Bulgaria was disliked in Rome, and contacts were soon established between Boris and Pope Nicolaus I. However, the territorial proximity of Byzantium prevailed as a factor and Boris' original orientation

toward the East stayed. It became solidly rooted when in the ensuing years he patterned the organization of his State after Byzantium and introduced to Bulgaria adaptations of Byzantine law, such as the "Statute of Trial of Men", the "Nomocanon", etc.

The new church strongly tended to emancipate itself from the primacy of the Patriarch of Constantinople and rid itself of Byzantine clergy. A fortunate chance presented itself when an alphabet was devised to suit the peculiarities of the Slavic tongues. A wave of Slav awakening hit Bulgaria during the reign of Boris' son, Simeon I, and soon scriptures and prayer books, in Bulgarian, displaced the media of Byzantine influence. The process was so rapid and his military victories so promising that Simeon proclaimed the archbishop of Preslav a patriarch independent of the Patriarch of Constantinople and himself Czar of the Bulgarians and the Greeks. Seven bishoprics were established, of which those of Preslav and Ochrida (Macedonia) became important centers of enlightenment.

Bulgaria turned again toward Rome in the 13th century. Desirous of international recognition which had been lost during the Byzantine domination of Bulgaria (1018 - 1186), the Bulgarian King Kaloyan contacted the Pope with an offer to accept the Pope's primacy over the Bulgarian church in exchange for an imperial crown. In 1204, a Catholic cardinal arrived at the Bulgarian capital Tirnovo to hand a crown to Kaloyan on behalf of the Pope and ordain a Bulgarian prelate. This Western orientation caused by the Crusades and dictated by political expediency was rather short-lived. In 1232, Kaloyan's successor, Ivan Asen, denounced

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Thus, in 1859, the inhabitants of the Macedonian towns of Doiran and of Kukush (Kilkish), north of Salonika, now in Yugoslav and Greek lands, respectively, left the Patriarchate to form a Bulgarian Uniate Church which registered some gains in Macedonia and Thrace, particularly in Adrianople, between 1860 - 1870, before the Bulgarian Exarchate was established. In these two regions the Vatican appointed bishops for the dioceses which were established there, and toward the end of that decade, a young Bulgarian patriot, Dragan Tzankoff, who later was to play a considerable part in the political life of the Principedom of Bulgaria at the head of the liberal party, began serious negotiations with the Vatican for the incorporation of the entire Bulgarian nation into the Roman Church as a Uniate Church. A Uniate Archbishopric was established, but proved to be of short life. The Turkish government authorized rather the establishment of the Exarchate as the Bulgarian National Church.

The Bulgarian Uniates, like the Uniates in the Ukraine and in Byelorussia, constituted a special branch of Catholics. They preserved the dogmas and rituals and other religious rules of the Eastern Church, but accepted the supreme authority of the Pope, praying for him during the Mass and mentioning him as the supreme church authority instead of the Patriarch, and later, the Exarch.

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The Uniate movement was centered around Salonika and directed from Constantinople. It rendered great services to the Bulgarian population in Macedonia and Thrace under the

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797 Ottoman Empire. Its influence was greatest in the vilayet (province) of Salonika. A great cathedral was erected in that city in 1878 to replace the little chapel which had until then served the small Catholic community. The same soon took place in Adrianople. The Uniate communities of these two cities, with the authorization of the Turkish authorities and the material support of the Vatican, founded primary and secondary schools for their children. These schools helped considerably the Bulgarian population, exposed immediately after the Russo-Turkish War of 1878 to the double persecutions by the Greek clergy, who were trying to detach it from the Exarchate. The Catholic educational institutions educated a great number of indigent children who later made powerful contributions to the cultural progress of the Bulgarian Nation.

Several religious missions came to these regions from Rome, and, once established, did some beneficial work. Two of them particularly distinguished themselves. One was the Order of St. Vincent of Paul of the Brothers and Sisters of Charity, which acquired the estate of Zeitinlik, two kilometers from the Varder Gate of Salonika, on the road to Serres and where they erected the vast buildings of the "Bulgarian Catholic School of St. Cyril and Methodius", circled by a great wall; the other was the school of the two italian clerics, Brother Guiseppe Aloati and Sister Christne Aloati, of Turin, who, in 1892, bought a large farm, near the village of Palortzi, in the region of Ghevgheli, in Macedonia, actually located on the Greek-Yugoslav border on which they founded an orphanage with a convent school for nurses and one for home economics, and

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where many Bulgarian children of Southern Macedonia found asylum, especially after the great insurrection of August 1903. After the Balkan War, which Bulgaria fought for the liberation of her national territories of Macedonia and Thrace from Turkish rule, but which ended disastrously for her, these two important centers of education for the Bulgarian youths were suppressed, the school buildings and their grounds having been seized by the Greek and Serbian authorities, which likewise forced all other Bulgarian schools under their jurisdiction to be closed. This brutal occupation was resented by the local population, and many disgraceful scenes took place, such as the suppression of the school in Palortzi. The order stated that instructions be changed from the Bulgarian to the Serbian language; Father and Sister Alonti declared that when they established the school, they had found nothing but Bulgarian children in that region and that, for this reason, they could not fail in their duty to teach these children in their own Bulgarian language. This courageous declaration was unanimously supported by the students, who declared that they were Bulgarians and that they had no desire to learn the Serbian language. The order to change the language which was repeated several times was not carried out. One day a detachment of Serbian police invaded the grounds of the school with the official notice that either the curriculum was going to be Serbianized, or the school was to be evacuated immediately. The teachers and students remained firm in their attitude and preferred

exile to renunciation of the Bulgarian character of the school. With their few belongings that they managed to salvage, they sought refuge in Bulgaria.

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The Uniate movement did not expand after the establishment of the Exarchate in 1871 and the creation of a Bulgarian State in 1879. The towns of Adrianople and Kukash were devastated and almost destroyed by the Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913. Turkey and Greece soon thereafter expelled most of the Bulgarian population of these regions. The Uniates among them were dispersed throughout Bulgaria and disappeared as an organized religious community.

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Between the two world wars a powerful Catholic action was begun by Italy in the Balkans and particularly in Bulgaria. This action was carried out by a special religious organization called "Pro Oriente". It did not, however, pursue religious aims but pure Italian propaganda and there is beyond the scope of this report.

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The foreign denominations, however, have even enjoyed the greatest freedom in Bulgaria, this freedom being consecrated by the Constitution itself (see supra) and were under the supervision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which also took care of the ecclesiastic affairs of the Bulgarian Church. The Constitution of 1879 had created in this Ministry a bureau in charge of the denominations.

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The need for a special law for the foreign denominations was not even felt under the pre-war regime. Such a law was not

APPENDIX B

to Chapter V

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Activities of the Protestant Churches in Bulgaria

(Report prepared by Mrs. M. C. Markham from "The Story of the American Board" by William E. Strong. 1910; "Valorous Ventures" by Mary Isham, Methodist Women's Board and Personal Experiences.)

Protestantism came into Bulgaria through Boston. It came at the time when Bulgaria was still a part of European Turkey. It was brought in by American missionaries who received their inspiration and religious fervor during the time of the religious revival in America, following shortly after the Revolutionary War in the United States of America.

So, in 1810, there was organized in Boston, Massachusetts, the A.B.C.F.M., or the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, for the purpose of sending missionaries to carry the gospel to the world.

From the beginning the Board had its eye on the Holy Land. It seemed intolerable to its founders that Christianity's birthplace should be forever in the grip of Islam, or left to the lifeless form of Christianity then found in Palestine.

The first attempts at missionary work in Turkey were not directed especially toward the Mohammedans nor to the Oriental Christians, but to the Jews when in 1819 the first two workers were sent to work in Turkey. At first they settled in Smyrna.

They were sent with the purpose of surveying the field

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to see what could be done. They felt the field was a great challenge, for at that time the Turkish Empire was vast and covered almost every land named in Bible history. It extended also into Europe--into Greece and the Balkan Provinces.

They found there were 40,000,000 people crowded together and yet separated by irreconcilable differences of race and religion and embittered by years of controversy and warfare.

Except in coastal cities there were scarcely any educated men; the women were uniformly illiterate. There was no literature, apparently no desire for it, under the oppressive hand of the sultancaliph at Constantinople.

The early missionaries in Turkey worked with great endurance, persistence and devotion, suffering much from the primitive conditions in the country. They made careful investigations and did a great deal of exploring before planting their mission stations.

In 1830 some American Board missionaries set up a station at Constantinople for the Spanish Jews. They definitely stated then that they came as helpers, not as antagonists, of the Armenians and church. They hoped to "redeem that church to a more vital religion".

In 1840 a small boarding school for boys and young men started in Bebek - Constantinople - by Cyrus Hamlin. This school later developed into a theological school to train preachers. In 1862 circumstances made great changes in the

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school. By this time the missionaries felt their theological training school should be more available for Asiatic Turkey and away from a big city. Therefore, the theological school was moved into Asia Minor. About the same time, in 1863, a Mr. Christopher R. Robert of New York, was urging Dr. Hamlin to found a Christian college to furnish higher education for all races in the Turkish Empire. So in 1863 the Robert College was founded, which was to educate and train future Bulgarians.

In 1845 a girls' boarding school was started by the missionaries in Constantinople with two pupils. This later became the well-known and important "American College for Girls at Constantinople", in 1872.

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Many Armenians became attracted to the new form of Christianity and after some time the Orthodox Armenians began severe persecution of their "evangelicals" and finally resorted to excommunication. This treatment caused the organization of the first Protestant Church on July 1, 1846, in Constantinople.

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The American Board began its work in European Turkey in 1858. For some time attention had been turned to this part of the Empire as a strategic missionary field.

Dr. Hamilin of the school at Bebek, on a visit to England in 1856, enlisted the substantial aid of friends there, notably the Earl of Shaftesbury and the Turkish Missions Aid Society in the needy and important lands which Turkey held in Europe.

It was felt that in this middle ground between East

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and West, where 4,000,000 Moslems were in close contact with western civilization and where also various Christian sects touched western Christianity, there was a field not to be passed over in my effort to carry the gospel into Asia.

Moreover, "the Bulgarians, the leading race in the Balkans, ambitious, progressive, and liberty-loving, made a particular appeal to the sympathies of the civilized world". (The Story of the American Board by William B. Strong).

In 1857 Dr. Hamlin, with a representative of the Turkish Missions Aid Society, made a tour of investigation into European Turkey and brought back a glowing report. They found "a people poor and ignorant indeed, yet thrifty and eager for learning".

By an understanding with the Methodist Episcopal Church North, of America, the American Board - Congregationalist - took its share of the land to be cultivated, the region south of the Balkans, placing its first missionaries at Adrianople.

Plovdiv was made the second station.

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The missionaries were brave, enthusiastic, gifted men and women. Their school for girls in Stara Zagora and the school for young men at Plovdiv prospered and encouraged the missionaries. But there were discouraging experiences too; influential parents at Stara Zagora withdrew their daughters when they understood the Protestant character of the school, and in 1867 a mob attacked the school and would have carried off the scholars but for the coolness and vigor of Mr. Morse in withstanding them.

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Here an appeal to the new law of religious liberty in Turkey, together with the help of friendly officials brought good results even from persecution.

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One of the best-known contributions of the Protestants to Bulgaria began as a little mission school for young men in 1860. It was called "The Collegiate and Theological Institute" and started with four pupils. It was shifted to several locations ans was closed temporarily during troublesome times, but was finally reestablished in 1871 at Samokov. The mission school for girls was also moved to Samokov that same year.

Samokov was chosen as a more promising town at that time. The climate was much better than in the hot district around Plovdiv. There were still no railroads in the country, and Sofia was an insignificant little place. There were prospering iron mines at Samokov and the place seemed one that would grow in the future.

Both boarding schools increased in attendance and in influence.

On June 30, 1871, the initial annual meeting of the European Turkey Mission was held at Stara Zagora. To this meeting the scholarly Dr. Riggs of Constantinople brought the first bound volume of theBulgarian Bible. At this meeting the "European Turkey Mission" was organized. It was the first mission of the Board that, from the beginning, had the Bible in the language which the people could understand.

In 1871 the first evangelical church in Macedonis was organized at Bansko

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organized at Bansko.

In 1875 the Bulgarian Evangelical Society, a native agency, was organized. This Society has been an important part of the Protestant work in Bulgaria. It was run by Bulgarians, distributed religious literature and tracts, Sunday school literature; it helped the native churches, and in recent times had taken over the publishing and editing of the Bulgarian religious weekly, "The Zornitsa", which was started missionaries in Constantinople, in 1871, where there was a Bulgarian printing press belinging to the Missions.

These were fearful times when Bulgaria became a separate principality through insurrection and war. The mission work suffered. The horrible massacres of the revolution and the ravages of the Russo-Turkish War spread terror and tumult through the land. Regular mission work was suspended in the most part; people hid in the mountains; missionary families left for Constantinople; Stara Zagora was destroyed; Samokov was threatened. Turkish officers and neighbors protected the missionaries and saved Samokov.

After the calamity, the missionaries became very efficient ministers of relief. As always in such times, they collected and distributed funds and relief in large quantities.

In spite of the troublesome times there was an era of advance in the European Turkey Mission after the first 15 years of its life.

During the decade 1877-87 the missionary advance

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among the Bulgarians was rapid, judged by such tokens as increase in numbers, contributions of native Christians, the appearance of able native Christians, and the development of the Bulgarian Evangelical Society.

There were obstacles for the mission work too, because the Bulgarians hesitated in coming out for the new church. They felt it was disloyal to accept anything which discredited their state church; also there was much irreligion appearing with the new political freedom.

With all of this, though, many people who were educated in the mission schools and at Robert College and the Women's College at Constantinople admit their indebtedness to these schools.

With all of this, though, many people who were educated in the mission schools and at Robert College and the Women's College at Constantinople admit their indebtedness to these schools.

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When a new church building was dedicated in Sofia, the capital, in 1888, one of the large audience was Prince Ferdinand, who on leaving presented the church with 500 francs as a token of good will.

During this period there was some hindrance to the work, especially in Macedonia, by the feuds between the races which resulted in frequent outbreaks.

In 1896 when war broke out between the Turks and the Greeks, Saloniki and Monastir (Bitolia) were the centers of

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activity and the mission work was again disturbed.

This was a period when the religious literature was very much in demand in Macedonia. There was much unrest among the people, great eagerness for liberty and comparative seclusion from the world, so that the mountain people were especially attracted to the religious tracts.

On September 3, 1901, in the mountains of Macedonia, near the Bulgarian border, a comitadji band fell upon a group of Christian workers and carried off for ransom Miss Ellen Stone and Mrs. Tsilka, the wife of a Bulgarian preacher. The story of this event is well known. After 172 days in captivity in the mountains near Bansko, the two women and the baby, born in captivity, were set free upon payment of a ransom of $68,200. The comitadji band turned out to revolutionary leaders.

There were turbulent times in Macedonia, but the missionaries remained at their posts and their little schools, churches, and their pastoral visiting continued in spite of all difficulties.

The missionaries were unable to distribute much relief to those about them during this period.

In 1898 the publishing department was transferred from Constantinople to Samokov. A special missionary was appointed to have charge of this work and the "Zornitsa", which had been suspended for a short time because of the lack of funds was resumed. It was thought better that this work should be done on Bulgarian soil.

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After World War I this missionary, with a committee of scholars, revised the Bulgarian Bible.

Later on, a new Hymn book was published for the use of the schools and churches.

The schools at Samokov had grown and in the early 900's they were feeling the need for new equipment. New buildings were put up for them, as well as for church meeting hourses in the villages.

There was a call for better-trained preachers, so the staff was increased in the schools, and some young men were sent abroad to study.

It was during this time that the well-known kindergarten work of Miss Clarke was started in Sofia. It was pioneering work, but she trained many of Bulgaria's kindergarten teachers.

During the time of the Balkan Wars the Protestant work in Bulgaria was well established. The churches in the villages were active and attracted much interest. There were churches in Sofia and Plovdiv and were well attended. The two schools in Samokov were filled to capacity and were working toward government recognition with a better program besides the religious training they offered.

The pastors in the churches were better trained, and the churches were working toward self support. Bible women were active, holding meetings with the women and helping with child training.

During the Balkan Wars much relief work was taken

• 797 carried on among the refugees. The feeling of suspicion that had often been apparent was fast disappearing. Queen Eleonora, second wife of King Ferdinand, was a close friend of the Samokov missionaries and, with their help, persuaded the American Red Cross to send two trained women to conduct a school for nurses. This school was interrupted by the coming of the Germans to Sofia during World War I, but after the war the two American nurses opened their school in Sofia at the Red Cross Hospital, and thus began a splendid work which has given Bulgaria some excellent nurses. These young women are now working all over the country, doing fine welfare work among the villages, and carrying on public health work in the cities. The Protestants can well claim credit for this achievement, for at the time the work was started the nursing profession was looked down upon by the Bulgarians. It was only through the persistence of the director of the Girls' School in Samokov that she persuaded some of her graduates to enroll in the nursing school. It was a time of hard decision for these girls who had no encouragement from their families and friends and plenty of discouragement. They became a nucleus of a worthy work which has helped the people of Bulgaria boundlessly.

Perhaps the most important contribution to Bulgarian life and culture has come from the schools.

In 1874 the Women's Missionary Society of the Methodist-Episcopal Church sent out some women workers. They began their work among the women and taught the little children in the

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homes. Work was slow again because of the Russo-Turkish War.

In 1880 the missionaries felt a need for a school for girls, and a small one was started. In 1882 the Mission Board--Methodist--built a small building. There was very much persecution but the missionaries persisted and new American workers were sent out. Several primary schools were opened in Sistoff, Rustchuk, and Ochanie, with the Bible women teaching. The people grew more friendly and the Christians - Prostestants - were no longer stoned in the streets.

Sonn funds for two new buildings were granted by the Board in America and the school was recognized by the Bulgarian Goverment on June 3, 1927.

By this time the school was giving the regular gymnasium course and in addition had added a domestic science department.

A feature started by the missionaries at Lovetch was the Daily Vacation Bible School. In 1926 they had 575 pupils in attendance.

The Lovetch school has been a vital factor in preparing many of the Christian women in Bulgaria.

One should mention also that there were throughout Northern Bulgarian and in Sofia well-established Methodist Churches. Their pastors have been trained abroad in many instances. Although the membership in the churches is not large, there are good attendances at the meetings, and the reputation of the "Protestants" or "Evangelisti" is of the highest

● 791 for integrity and high standards of conduct.

At different times the Methodists have had publications in Bulgarian also. In recent years the trend has been to unite the work in north and south Bulgaria. So that both sections meet together in annual conferences. both are responsible for the publications, that is, they were until the present Communist Government stopped all such work, The school at Lovetch is also closed, and the last principal, the late Miss Mellony Turner, was expelled by the communists in 1948.

A direct outgrowth of the Protestant work in Bulgaria was the American Grade School in Sofia. It began in 1923 to fill a need for the children finishing the kindergarten organized by Miss Clarke some years before. She had hoped to have a full course of American schools for children in Bulgaria. Mrs. Woodruff began the grade school which did excellent work and continued with overflowing attendance until it was closed by the Nazis in 1942. The school has not been able as yet to reopen.

Another contribution of the Protestants was the village and folk school for girls and boys in Pordim in 1929. This school was founded by Dr. and Mrs. Edward Haskell with the purpose to train the village youth for practical living. The girls especially were trained for better housekeeping, child care, etc. This school is now under government control.

The best known Protestant school in Bulgaria is what is now called the "American College", near Sofia. It is the

the outgrowth of the little school that went to Samokov soon after mission work began in Bulgaria. 797

Eventually both the boys' and thr girls' schools in the compound at Samokov outgrew their plant. The boys had some practical work along with the regular gymnasium course which had been recognized by the government in 1922. There was a printing plant and a carpenter shop in connection with the boys' school.

After World War I when the work took on new vigor, the missionaries began to feel the need for enlarging the scope .. their work and of providing wider opportunities for their students. The funds of the Mission Board were not suffiecient for such work, so when the invitation came for the schools to join the Near East Colleges Foundation, it was decided to take part in that. It meant putting the schools under a swparate Board with the other colleges of the Near East. It also meant moving the schools to Sofia, which was now a big city and the capital. A fine new plant was built outside Sofia on a fine plot of land. The school began moving over to Sofia in 1927 and continued to work there until it also was closed by the Nazis in 1942. It has not been reopened by the Americans, and the Communists are at present using the buildings for a Police School.

In mentioning the contribution of the Protestants, we should not forget the temperance work which was started by the Clarkes. There were Temperance Leagues in all the church

797 communities, and they worked only for the good of the communities.

797 575 The organizations of the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A. were started independently of the Protestant or mission people. But those starting both organizations were people who had been closely connected the the Protestant work in Bulgaria. The purpose of organizing these was to make them serve all Bulgarians, espscially the Orthodox Christians as well. The Y.M.C.A. was started by the husband of a graduate of the Lovetch School, who was not a Protestant himself, and a friend of his, a banker who was a Methodist. They were able to have an American secretary sent out, and the Y.M.C.A. did an excellent work for the Bulgarian youths. It held evening classes and had fine summer camps in the mountains and on the Black Sea.

The Y.W.C.A. was started by a graduate who was the daughter of a graduate from the Women's College at Constantinople, a Bulgarian. She was ably assisted by several young women who were graduates also of the Constantinople School. The Y.W.C.A. was a vigorous and successful undertaking, reaching many young women and girls in Bulgaria. It conducted many classes and had a summer camp for industrial girls at Zemen all through the summer. It also carried on a good work for the factory girls around Sofia.

Both the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A. have been closed since the arrival of the Nazis in 1942. The Communists also do not allow them to continue their work.

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The Protestants had started an orphanage or two and these were being carried on in a Christian manner. It is not known whether or not they are still in operation. 797

It is appropriate in these notes to mention the recent trials of early 1949 when 15 Protestant pastors were brought before the courts in Sofia and condemned by the Communists for treason. Much attention was given to these trials by the outside world. The trials were a part of the general persecution of religion and religious workers by the present Communists. 798

These Bulgarian pastors were on the whole humble people, representing small religious groups. They were trying in every way to conform to the new regulations of the Communists, so they were not dangerous to the regime. All they wanted was to be able to work quietly among their people. Several of them even went so far as to serve the Communists and try to show that the Communist regime was really a democratic one. Strange to say, these men suffered most in the trials and the sentences.

Aside from being representatives of religious groups, these men were also attached to American groups of the same name in America, so that fact worked against them too. The Communists want to convince their countries that religion and America are enemies of Communism.

At present in Bulgaria anyone who has at any time been connected with America, American schools, or organizations starting from America, is under surveillance and does not consider himself outside danger